

# OPUS



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An original monumental sculpture designed to commemorate an old furnace.

A sculpture over five metres high with a diameter of two metres and weighing over five tons, designed entirely out of "old" materials like clay, bronze and Corten steel and whose forms and colours call to mind the red-brick chimneys of old furnaces. This is the first thing that strikes you when looking at Opus, the sculpture the Osimo (Ancona) Town Council commissioned Franco Torciani to embellish the housing estate that rose up from the "ashes" of old Fagioli furnace. It took the artist almost two years to make the sculpture using three different materials: Corten steel for the structure, a typical industrial material that never wears out but oxidises in the air to turn brown; then clay was used for the coating, actually hand-made applying the same technique used for brick-making in centuries gone-by; finally, bronze was used for the inserts, fused like lost-wax and then given a copper green coating. The main problem that needed to be tackled was how to attach the terracotta parts that needed to be fixed at their narrowest bits and, most significantly, be placed on top of each other without any grouts or fillings between them. Torciani's project involved assembling the bricks into what looks like a disjointed pile rising up into the sky.

Photo 1. After setting the bricks in place, they were gradually glued to the panels using grey-coloured KERALASTIC.

Photo 2. Franco Torciani (left) was personally involved in attaching the bricks to the structure.

Photo 3. ANTIPLUVIOL 5 was first applied to the bricks while they were on the ground, during assembly operations.

Photo 4. Assembly of one of the two top sections of the structure.

Photo 5. A panel was mounted right where the sculpture will stand. The part deliberately left hollow will be covered with bricks after all the panels have been set in place.

Photo 6. The joints were sealed with black-coloured MAPESIL AC on one part and covered with KERALASTIC on the other.

Photo 7. Opus as it looks after completing the assembly operations.



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These elements had to be attached to the vibrated concrete panels with an approximately 3 cm Corten steel frame round the edges. This meant a product had to be found that adhered perfectly to the concrete and steel frame, maintained a certain structural flexibility, and was hard-wearing. In addition to the two inside walls, each composed of four panels and covering an overall surface area of about 8 m<sup>2</sup>, two three-dimensional objects to be placed on top of the sculpture also had to be coated with bricks. These objects were also made of concrete with Corten steel ribbing. The bricks were attached using grey-coloured KERALASTIC\*, a two-component polyurethane adhesive, and placed as close together as possible. The adhesive was spread over the surface of the panels and side of the bricks almost right to the top, so as to make the structure as waterproof as possible. This operation was carried out on a flat floor to make work easier; the only exception were the bricks near the overlap joints between one panel and another, which were attached after the sculpture had been assembled. Near these joints, KERALASTIC\* was only placed on the edge of the top panel, preferring to use MAPESIL AC\* for



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the lower panel, a mildew-resistant silicone sealant capable of compensating for expansion and preventing the material from breaking. After completing the attachment and assembly operations, the terracotta elements were treated with the transparent water-repellent compound ANTIPLUVIOL S\*, until they were completely saturated to reduce the risk of rain seeping in. This product had already been applied to the bricks when they were on the ground during assembly operations. Lastly, KERALASTIC\* was also spread over the upper parts not visible from the ground, again to prevent any dangerous infiltrations.

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\* The products referred to in this article belong to the "Building Products" and "Products for Ceramic Tiles and Stone Materials" ranges. The technical data sheets are available on the CD entitled "Mapei Global Infonet" and at the Internet site: [www.mapei.com](http://www.mapei.com).



The Mapei adhesives and grouts conform to EN 12004 and EN 13888 standards. **Antipluviol S:** transparent siloxane resin-based water-repellent compound. **Keralastic (R2):** Two-component polyurethane adhesive for ceramic tiles and stone materials. **Mapesil AC:** Solvent-free, acetic-crosslinking mildew-resistant silicone sealant. Available in 26 colours and transparent.

#### TECHNICAL DATA

**Opus, monumental sculpture in Osimo (Ancona) - Italy**  
 Built: 2002  
 Client: Osimo Town Council (Ancona)  
 Designer and works manager: Franco Torciani  
 Mapei products: KERALASTIC, MAPESIL AC, ANTIPLUVIOL S  
 Mapei coordinator: Giorgio Roncan

This project received a special mention in the Curiosities section of the "1° Grand Prix Reference Mapei 2002" competition. We would like to congratulate all those who took part in its design and construction, and thank the people who provided us with all the relative information.